IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims to read as follows:

Listing of Claims

1-20. (Canceled)

21. (Currently Amended) A method of operating a hydrogen generator comprising the steps of:

(a) heating a reformer by a heater;

(b) causing a steam reforming reaction to proceed to generate a reformed gas by said reformer;

(c) causing a shift reaction of carbon monoxide in the reformed gas to proceed by a shift converter; [[and]]

(d) counting the number of times of start-up and/or stop of said hydrogen generator including said reformer, said shift converter, and said heater; and

(e) counting an accumulated operation time of said hydrogen generator,

wherein the step [[(b)]] (c) includes:

step [[(b1)]] (c1) causing the shift reaction to proceed at a first controlled temperature if the counted number of times of start-up and/or stop of said hydrogen generator is less than a predetermined number of times, [[and]]

step [[(b2)]] (c2) causing the shift reaction to proceed at a second controlled temperature

higher than the first controlled temperature if the counted number of times of start-up and/or stop of said hydrogen generator is not less than the predetermined number of times,

(c3) causing the shift reaction to proceed at a third controlled temperature if the counted accumulated operation time of said hydrogen generator is less than a predetermined time, and

(c4) causing the shift reaction to proceed at a fourth controlled temperature higher than the third controlled temperature if the counted accumulated operation time of said hydrogen generator is not less than the predetermined time.

22. (Currently Amended) The method of operating a hydrogen generator according to claim 21, wherein

in step [[(b1)]] (c1), the shift reaction is caused to proceed at the first controlled temperature by adjusting a temperature of the reformed gas flowing into said shift converter; and

in step [[(b2)]] (c2), the shift reaction is caused to proceed at the second controlled temperature by adjusting the temperature of the reformed gas flowing into said shift converter.

23-28. (Cancelled)

29. (Currently Amended) A method of operating a fuel cell system, the method comprising:

(a) heating a reformer by a heater;

(b) causing a steam reforming reaction to proceed to generate a reformed gas by said

reformer

(c) causing a shift reaction of carbon monoxide in the reformed gas to proceed by a shift converter; [[and]]

(d) counting the number of times of start-up and/or stop of said fuel cell system comprising said hydrogen generator including said reformer, said shift converter, and said heater, and a fuel cell; and

(e) counting an accumulated operation time of said hydrogen generator,

wherein the step [[(b)]] (c) includes:

step [[(b1)]] (c1) causing the shift reaction to proceed at a first controlled temperature if the counted number of times of start-up and/or stop of said hydrogen generator is less than a predetermined number of times, [[and]]

step [[(b2)]] (c2) causing the shift reaction to proceed at a second controlled temperature higher than the first controlled temperature if the counted number of times of start-up and/or stop of said hydrogen generator is not less than the predetermined number of times,

(c3) causing the shift reaction to proceed at a third controlled temperature if the counted accumulated operation time of said hydrogen generator is less than a predetermined time, and

(c4) causing the shift reaction to proceed at a fourth controlled temperature higher than the third controlled temperature if the counted accumulated operation time of said hydrogen generator is not less than the predetermined time.

30. (Currently Amended) The method of operating a fuel cell system according to Claim 29, wherein:

in step [[(b1)]] (c1), the shift reaction is caused to proceed at the first controlled temperature by adjusting a temperature of the reformed gas flowing into said shift converter; and

in step [[(b2)]] (c2), the shift reaction is caused to proceed at the second controlled temperature by adjusting a temperature of the reformed gas flowing into said shift converter.

31-36. (Cancelled)